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AMERICAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION.

THE HISTORICAL WORK OF PROFESSOR
HERBERT TUTTLE.

BY

HERBERT B. ADAMS.

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IV.—THE HISTORICAL WORK OF PROF. HERBERT TUTTLE.

By Prof. HERBERT B. ADAMS, of Johns Hopkins University.

Since the Chicago meeting of the American Historical Association one of its most active workers in the field of European history has passed away. Prof. Herbert Tuttle, of Cornell University, was perhaps our only original American scholar in the domain of Prussian history. Several of our academic members have lectured upon Prussia, but Tuttle was an authority upon the subject. Prof. Rudolf Gneist, of the University of Berlin, said to Chapman Coleman, United States secretary of legation in Berlin, that Tuttle's History of Frederick the Great was the best written. The Pall Mall Gazette, July 11, 1888, in reviewing the same work, said: "This is a sound and solid piece of learning, and shows what good service America is doing in the field of history."¹

It is the duty of the American Historical Association to put on record the few biographical facts which Professor Tuttle's friends have been able to discover. Perhaps a more complete account may some day be written.

Herbert Tuttle was born November 29, 1846, in Bennington, Vt. Upon that historic ground, near one of the battlefields of the American Revolution, was trained the coming historian of the wars of Frederick. Herbert Tuttle went to college at Burlington, where he came under the personal influence of

¹ One of Professor Tuttle's Cornell students, Mr. U. G. Weatherby, wrote to him from Heidelberg, October, 1893: "You will probably be interested to know that I have called on Erdmannsdörffer, who, on learning that I was from Cornell, mentioned you and spoke most flatteringly of your History of Prussia, which he said had a peculiar interest to him as showing an American's views of Frederick the Great. Erdmannsdörffer is a pleasant man in every way and an attractive lecturer." The Heidelberg professor is himself an authority upon Prussian history. He has edited the *Urkunden und Aktenstücke zur Geschichte des Kurfürsten Friedrich Wilhelm von Brandenburg*, a long series of volumes devoted to the documentary history of the period of the Great Elector.

James B. Angell, then president of the University of Vermont and now ex-president of the American Historical Association.

Dr. Angell was one of the determining forces in Mr. Tuttle's later academic career, which began in the University of Michigan.

Among the permanent traits of Mr. Tuttle's character, developed by his Vermont training, were (1) an extraordinary soundness of judgment, (2) a remarkably quick wit, and (3) a passionate love of nature. The beautiful environment of Burlington, on Lake Champlain, the strength of the hills, the keenness of the air, the good sense, the humor, and shrewdness of the people among whom he lived and worked, had their quickening influence upon the young Vermonter. President Buckham, of the University of Vermont, recently said of Mr. Tuttle: "I have the most vivid recollection of his brilliancy as a writer on literary and historic themes, a branch of the college work then in my charge. We shall cherish his memory as one of the treasures of the institution."

Herbert Tuttle, like all true Americans, was deeply interested in politics. The subject of his commencement oration was "Political faith," and to his college ideal he always remained true. To the end of his active life he was laboring with voice and pen for the cause of civic reform. Indeed, his whole career, as journalist, historian, and teacher, is the direct result of his interest in politics, which is the real life of society. From Burlington, where he was graduated in 1869, he went to Boston, where for nearly two years he was on the editorial staff of the Boston Advertiser. His acuteness as an observer and as a critic was here further developed. He widened his personal acquaintance and his social experience. He became interested in art, literature, and the drama. His desire was quickened for travel and study in the Old World.

We next find young Tuttle in Paris for nearly two years, acting as correspondent for the Boston Advertiser and the New York Tribune. He attended lectures at the Sorbonne and Collège de France. He made the acquaintance of Guizot, who recommended for him a course of historical reading. He contributed an article to Harper's Monthly on the Mont de Piété. He wrote an article for the Atlantic Monthly in 1872 on French Democracy. The same year he published an editorial on the Alabama claims in the Journal des Débats. About the same time he wrote letters to the New York Tribune on

the Geneva Arbitration. Tuttle's work for the Tribune was so good that Mr. George W. Smalley, its well-known London representative, recommended him for the important position of Berlin correspondent for the London Daily News. This salaried office Tuttle held for six years (1873–1879), during which time he enjoyed the best of opportunities for travel and observation in Germany, Austria, Russia, and the Danube provinces. Aside from his letters to the London Daily News, some of the fruits of these extended studies of European politics appear in a succession of articles in the Gentleman's Magazine for 1872–73: "The parliamentary leaders of Germany;" "Philosophy of the Falk laws;" "The author of the Falk laws;" "Club life in Berlin."

In 1876 was published by the Putnams in New York, Tuttle's book on German political leaders. From 1876 to 1879, when he returned to America, Tuttle was a busy foreign correspondent for the great English daily and a contributor to American magazines. Among his noteworthy articles are: (1) Prussian Wends and their home (*Harper's Monthly*, March, 1876); (2) Naturalization treaty with Germany (*The Nation*, 1877); (3) Parties and politics in Germany (*Fortnightly Review*, 1877); (4) *Die Amerikanischen Wahlen* (*Die Gegenwart*, October, 1878); (5) Reaction in Germany (*The Nation*, June, 1879); (6) German Politics (*Fortnightly Review*, August, 1879).

While living in Berlin Mr. Tuttle met Miss Mary McArthur Thompson, of Hillsboro, Highland County, Ohio, a young lady of artistic tastes, whom he married July 6, 1875. In Berlin he also met President Andrew D. White, of Cornell University, who was then our American minister in Germany. Like Dr. Angell, President White was a determining influence in Tuttle's career. Mr. White encouraged him in his ambitious project of writing a history of Prussia, for which he began to collect materials as early as 1875. More than one promising young American was discovered in Berlin by Mr. White. At least three were invited by him to Cornell University to lecture on their chosen specialties: Herbert Tuttle on history and international law, Henry C. Adams on economics, and Richard T. Ely on the same subject. All three subsequently became university professors.

Before going to Cornell University, however, Mr. Tuttle accepted an invitation in September, 1880, to lecture on international law at the University of Michigan during the absence

of President Angell as American minister in China. Thus the personal influence first felt at the University of Vermont was renewed after an interval of ten years, and the department of President Angell was temporarily handed over to his former pupil. In the autumn of 1881 Mr. Tuttle was appointed lecturer on international law at Cornell University for one semester, but still continued to lecture at Ann Arbor. In 1883 he was made associate professor of history and theory of politics and international law at Ithaca. In 1887, by vote of the Cornell trustees, he was elected to a full professorship. I have a letter from him, written March 10, the very day of his appointment, saying:

You will congratulate me on my election, which took place to-day, as full professor. The telegraphic announcements which you may see in the newspapers putting me into the law faculty may be misleading unless I explain that my title is, I believe, professor of the history of political and municipal institutions in the regular faculty. But on account of my English Constitutional History and International Law, I am also put in the law faculty, as is Tyler for American Constitutional History and Law.

Professor Tuttle was one of the original members of the American Historical Association, organized ten years ago at Saratoga, September 9-10, 1884. His name appears in our first annual report (*Papers of the American Historical Association*, Vol. I, p. 43). At the second annual meeting of the association, held in Saratoga, September 10, 1885, Professor Tuttle made some interesting remarks upon "New materials for the history of Frederick the Great of Prussia." By new materials he meant such as had come to light since Carlyle wrote his *Life of Frederick*. After mentioning the more recent German works, like Arneth's *Geschichte Maria Theresa*, Droyssen's *Geschichte der preussischen Politik*, the new edition of Ranke, the Duc de Broglie's *Studies in the French Archives*, and the Publications of the Russian Historical Society, Mr. Tuttle called attention to the admirable historical work lately done in Prussia in publishing the political correspondence of Frederick the Great, including every important letter written by Frederick himself, or by secretaries under his direction, bearing upon diplomacy or public policy.

At the same meeting of the association, Hon. Eugene Schuyler gave some account of the historical work that had been done in Russia. The author of *The Life of Peter the*

Great, which first appeared in the Century Magazine, and the author of The History of Prussia under Frederick the Great were almost inseparable companions at that last Saratoga meeting of this association in 1885. I joined them on one or two pleasant excursions and well remember their good fellowship and conversation. Both men were somewhat critical with regard to our early policy, but Mr. Tuttle in subsequent letters to me indicated a growing sympathy with the object of the association, which, by the constitution, is declared to be "the promotion of historical studies." In the letter above referred to, he said:

You will receive a letter from Mr. Winsor about a paper which I suggested for the Historical Association. It is by our fellow in history, Mr. Mills, and is an account of the diplomatic negotiations, etc., which preceded the seven years' war, from sources which have never been used in English. As you know, I am as a rule opposed to presenting in the association papers which have been prepared in seminaries, but as there will probably be little on European history I waive the principle.

After the appearance of the report of our fourth annual meeting, held in Boston and Cambridge May 21–24, 1887, Mr. Tuttle wrote, October 18, 1888, expressing his gratification with the published proceedings, and adding, "I think the change from Columbus to Washington a wise one." There had been some talk of holding the annual meeting of the association in the State capital of Ohio, in order to aid in the commemoration of the settlement of the Old Northwest Territory.

From the time of his return to America until the year 1888 Mr. Tuttle continued to make valuable contributions to periodical literature. The following list illustrates his general literary activity from year to year:

- 1880. Germany and Russia; Russia as viewed by Liberals and Tories; Lessons from the Prussian Civil Service. (*The Nation*, April.)
- 1881. The German Chancellor and the Diet. (*The Nation*, April.)
- 1881. The German Empire. (*Harper's Monthly*, September.)
- 1882. Some Traits of Bismarck. (*Atlantic Monthly*, February.)
- 1882. The Eastern Question. (*Atlantic Monthly*, June.)
- 1883. A Vacation in Vermont. (*Harper's Monthly*, November.)
- 1884. Peter the Great. (*Atlantic Monthly*, July.)
- 1884. The Despotism of Party. (*Atlantic Monthly*, September.)
- 1885. John DeWitt. (*The Dial*, December.)
- 1886. Pope and Chancellor. (*The Cosmopolitan*, August.)
- 1886. Lowe's Life of Bismarck. (*The Dial*.)
- 1887. The Huguenots and Henry of Navarre. (*The Dial*, January.)

1887. Frederick the Great and Madame de Pompadour. (*Atlantic Monthly*, January.)
1888. The Outlook in Germany. (*The Independent*, June.)
1888. History of Prussia under Frederick the Great, 2 vols. (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.)
1888. The Value of English Guarantees. (*New York Times*. February.)
1888. The Emperor William. (*Atlantic Monthly*, May.)

The great work of Professor Tuttle was his History of Prussia, upon which he worked for more than ten years after his return from Germany. From November, 1879, until October, 1883, Mr. Tuttle was engaged upon the preparation of his first volume, which covers the history of Prussia from 1134 to 1740, or to the accession of Frederick the Great. He said in his preface that he purposed to describe the political development of Prussia and had made somewhat minute researches into the early institutions of Brandenburg. Throughout the work he paid special attention to the development of the constitution.

Mr. Tuttle had brought home from Germany many good materials which he had himself collected, and he was substantially aided by the cooperation of President White. Regarding this practical service, Professor Tuttle, in the preface to his *Frederick the Great*, said:

When, on the completion of my first volume of Prussian history, he [President White] learned that the continuation of the work might be made difficult, or at least delayed, by the scarcity of material in America he generously offered me what was in effect an unlimited authority to order in his name any books that might be necessary; so that I was enabled to obtain a large and indispensable addition to the historical work already present in Mr. White's own noble library and in that of the university.

Five years after the appearance of the first volume was published Tuttle's History of Prussia under Frederick the Great. One volume covered the subject from 1740 to 1745; another from 1745 to 1756. At the time of his death Mr. Tuttle left ready for the printer some fifteen chapters of the third volume of his "*Frederick*," or the fourth volume of the History of Prussia. He told his wife that the wars of Frederick would kill him. We know how Carlyle toiled and worried over that terribly complex period of European history represented by the wars and diplomacy of the Great Frederick. In his preface to his "*Frederick*" Mr. Tuttle said that he discovered during a residence of several years in Berlin how inadequate was Carlyle's account, and probably also his knowledge, of the working system of the Prussian Government in the eighteenth

century. Again the American writer declared the distinctive purpose of his own work to be a presentation of "the life of Prussia as a State, the development of polity, the growth of institutions, the progress of society." He said he had been aided in his work "by a vast literature which has grown up since the time of Carlyle." The description of that literature in Tuttle's preface is substantially his account of that subject as presented to the American Historical Association at Saratoga in 1885.

In his Life of Frederick, Mr. Tuttle took occasion to clear away many historical delusions which Carlyle and Macaulay had perpetuated. Regarding this wholesome service the Pall Mall Gazette, July 11, 1888, said:

It is quite refreshing to read a simple account of Maria Theresa's appeal to the Hungarians at Presburg without the "*moriāmūr pro rege nostro*" or the "picturesque myths" that have gathered around it. Most people, too, will surely be glad to learn from Mr. Tuttle that there is no foundation for the story of that model wife and mother addressing Mme. de Pompadour as "dear cousin" in a note, as Macaulay puts it, "full of expressions of esteem and friendship." "The text of such a pretended letter had never been given," and Maria Theresa herself denied that she had ever written to the Pompadour.

In the year 1891, at his own request, Professor Tuttle was transferred to the chair of modern European history, which he held as long as he lived. Although in failing health, he continued to work upon his History of Prussia until 1892 and to lecture to his students until the year before he died. A few days before his death he looked over the manuscript chapters which he had prepared for his fourth volume of the History of Prussia and said he would now devote himself to their completion; but the next morning he arose and exclaimed, "The end! the end! the end!" He died June 21, 1894, from a general breakdown. His death occurred on commencement day, when he had hoped to thank the board of trustees for their generous continuation of his full salary throughout the year of his disability. One of his colleagues, writing to the New York Tribune, July 18, 1894, said:

It was a significant fact that he died on this day, and that his many and devoted friends, his colleagues, and grateful students should still be present to attend the burial service and carry his body on the following day to its resting place. A proper site for his grave is to be chosen from amid the glorious scenery of this time-honored cemetery, where the chimes of

Cornell University will still ring over his head, and the student body in passing will recall the man of brilliant attainment and solid worth, the scholar of untiring industry, and the truthful, able historian, and will more and more estimate the loss to American scholarship and university life.

One of Professor Tuttle's favorite students, Herbert E. Mills, now professor of history at Vassar College, wrote as follows to the *New York Evening Post*, July 27, 1894:

In the death of Professor Tuttle the writing and teaching of history has suffered a great loss. The value of his work both as an investigator and as a university teacher is not fully appreciated except by those who have read his books carefully or have had the great pleasure and benefit of study under his direction. Among the many able historical lecturers that have been connected with Cornell University no one stood higher in the estimation of the students than Professor Tuttle.

Another of Professor Tuttle's best students, Mr. Ernest W. Huffcut, of Cornell University, says of him:

He went by instinct to the heart of every question and had a power and grace of expression which enabled him to lay bare the precise point in issue. As an academic lecturer he had few equals here or elsewhere in those qualities of clearness, accuracy, and force which go farthest toward equipping the successful teacher. He was respected and admired by his colleagues for his brilliant qualities and his absolute integrity, and by those admitted to the closer relationship of personal friends he was loved for his fidelity and sympathy of a spirit which expanded and responded only under the influence of mutual confidence and affection.

President Schurman, of Cornell University, thus speaks of Professor Tuttle's intellectual characteristics:

He was a man of great independence of spirit, of invincible courage, and of a high sense of honor; he had a keen and preeminently critical intellect and a ready gift of lucid and forceful utterance; his scholarship was generous and accurate, and he had the scholar's faith in the dignity of letters.

The first president of this association, and ex-president of Cornell University, Andrew D. White, in a personal letter said:

I have always prized my acquaintance with Mr. Tuttle. The first things from his pen I ever saw revealed to me abilities of no common order, and his later writings and lectures greatly impressed me. I recall with special pleasure the first chapters I read in his Prussian history, which so interested me that, although it was late in the evening, I could not resist the impulse to go to him at once to give him my hearty congratulations. I recall, too, with pleasure our exertions together in the effort to promote reform in the civil service. In this, as in all things, he was a loyal son of his country.

Another ex-president of the American Historical Association, Dr. James B. Angell, president of the University of Michigan, said of Mr. Tuttle:

Though his achievements as professor and historian perhaps exceed in value even the brilliant promise of his college days, yet the mental characteristics of the professor and historian were easily traced in the work of the young student. * * * By correspondence with him concerning his plans and ambitions, I have been able to keep in close touch with him almost to the time of his death. His aspirations were high and noble. He would not sacrifice his ideals of historical work for any rewards of temporary popularity. The strenuousness with which in his college work he sought for the exact truth clung to him to the end. The death of such a scholar in the very prime of his strength is indeed a serious loss for the nation and for the cause of letters.

At the funeral of Professor Tuttle, held June 23 in Sage Chapel, at Cornell University, Prof. Charles M. Tyler said:

Professor Tuttle was a brilliant scholar, a scrupulous historian, and what luster he had gained in the realm of letters you all know well. He possessed an absolute truthfulness of soul. He was impatient of exaggeration of statement, for he thought exaggeration was proof of either lack of conviction or weakness of judgment. His mind glanced with swift penetration over materials of knowledge, and with great facility he reduced order to system, possessing an intuitive power to divine the philosophy of events. Forest and mountain scenery appealed to his fine apprehensions, and his afflicted consort assures me that his love of nature, of the woods, the streams, the flowers and birds, constituted almost a religion. It was through nature that his spirit rose to exaltation of belief. He would say, "The Almighty gives the seeds of my flowers—God gives us sunshine to-day," and would frequently repeat the words of Goethe, "The sun shines after its old manner, and all God's works are as splendid as on the first day." (New York Tribune, July 15, 1894.)

Bishop Huntington, who knew Mr. Tuttle well, said of him in the *Gospel Messenger*, published at Syracuse, N. Y.:

He seemed to be always afraid of overdoing or oversaying. With uncommon abilities and accomplishments, as a student and writer, in tastes and sympathies, he may be said to have been fastidious. Such men win more respect than popularity, and are most valued after they die.

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